

App. Serial No.: 10/662,993
Atty. Docket No.: 0003-032P1

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (currently amended) A pipe-fitting winery piping system comprising:
a wine product source;
a wine product supply line coupled to receive said wine product from said wine product source;
a wine product discharge line;
at least one other wine product line; and
a tee fitting coupled between said wine product supply line, said wine product discharge line, and said other wine product line, said tee fitting including
a run tube including a cylindrical wall defining a first end opening, a second end opening, and an elongated throat opening;
a branch tube fitting defining a fluid passage; and
a tapered throat section coupled between said elongated throat opening and said branch tube fitting.
2. (currently amended) A pipe-fitting winery piping system according to Claim 1, wherein said first end opening is parallel to said second end opening.
3. (currently amended) A pipe-fitting winery piping system according to Claim 1, wherein said throat opening extends a majority of the length of said run tube.
4. (currently amended) A pipe-fitting winery piping system according to Claim 1, wherein at least one of said first end opening and said second end opening include a fitting for coupling said at least one of said first end opening and said second end opening to ~~a piping system~~ said wine product supply line.
5. (currently amended) A pipe-fitting winery piping system according to Claim 4, wherein said fitting of said at least one of said first end opening and said second opening comprises a flange.

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6. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 5, wherein said at least one of said first end opening and said second end opening defines a collar, said collar adapted to retain said flange about said at least one of said first end opening and said second end opening.

7. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 1, wherein a branch tube is interposed between said throat section and said branch tube fitting.

8. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 7, further including a collar around said branch tube and adapted to couple said branch tube fitting to ~~a piping system~~ said wine product discharge line.

9. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 1, wherein said branch tube fitting comprises a flange.

10. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 1, wherein the cross sectional area of said elongated throat opening is at least 1.25 times greater than the cross sectional area of said fluid passage.

11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to ~~Claim 11~~ Claim 1, wherein said ~~pipe tee~~ fitting is fabricated from stainless steel.

13. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting winery piping system~~ according to Claim 1, wherein:

said throat section includes a front wall and a back wall; and

said front wall and said back wall are tangentially coupled to said run tube.

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14. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 13, wherein:

a branch tube is interposed between said throat section and said branch tube fitting; and said front wall and said back wall are coupled to said branch tube.

15. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 13, wherein said front wall and said back wall are flat.

16. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 1, wherein said throat section includes a first side wall and a second side wall, said first side wall and said second side wall each defining a radius of curvature between said run tube and said branch tube fitting.

17. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 16, wherein:

said fluid passage is generally circular; and said radius of curvature is at least 1.5 times the diameter of at least one of said first end opening, said second end opening, and said fluid passage.

18. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system comprising:
at least three wine product lines; and
a tee fitting including

a body defining a generally triangular inner chamber~~[[;]]~~ and three connectors, each coupled ~~[[to]]~~ between a respective corner of said triangular chamber and a respective one of said wine product lines for providing fluid communication with said chamber.

19. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 18, wherein said body defines three fluid passages, each of said fluid passages in fluid communication with a respective one of said connectors.

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20. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 19, wherein said body defines a radius of curvature between two adjacent ones of said fluid passages.

21. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 20, wherein:

each of said fluid passages is generally circular; and
said radius of curvature is greater than 1.5 times the diameter of a largest one of said fluid passages.

22. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 20, wherein said radius of curvature is infinite.

23. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 18, wherein a tube is interposed between at least one of said connectors and an associated corner of said chamber.

24. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 18, wherein each of said connectors comprises a flange.

25. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 24, wherein each of said flanges is retained by a collar coupled to said body.

26. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system comprising:

a plurality of wine product pipes joined by a fitting, said fitting including

a tube having a cylindrical wall defining a first end opening, a second end opening,
and a throat opening;

a connector defining a fluid passage; and

a throat section coupled between said throat opening and said connector; and

wherein a cross-sectional area of said throat opening is at least 1.25 times greater
than a cross-sectional area of said fluid passage.

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27. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 26, wherein said cross-sectional area of said throat opening is at least two times greater than said cross-sectional area of said fluid passage.

28. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 26, wherein said cross-sectional area of said throat opening is at least three times greater than said cross-sectional area of said fluid passage.

29. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 26, wherein said throat opening is elongated.

30. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 26, wherein said throat section, in combination with a portion of said tube, forms a generally triangular inner chamber.

31. (currently amended) A ~~pipe-fitting~~ winery piping system according to Claim 26, wherein at least one of said first end opening and said second end opening include a connector for connecting said at least one of said first opening and said second opening to ~~a piping system~~ one of said plurality of wine product pipes.

32. (new) A method for connecting at least three pipes in a winery piping system, said method comprising:

providing a wine must tee including a run tube having a cylindrical wall defining a first end opening, a second end opening, and an elongated throat opening, said wine must tee further including a branch tube fitting defining a fluid passage, and a tapered throat section coupled between said elongated throat opening and said branch tube fitting; and

coupling each of said at least three pipes of said winery piping system to a respective one of said first end opening, said second end opening, and said branch tube fitting.

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33. (new) A method according to Claim 32, wherein:

at least one of said pipes of said winery piping system supplies a wine product to said wine must tee;

at least one other of said pipes of said winery piping system receives said wine product from said wine must tee; and

coupling said pipes of said winery piping system further includes coupling said pipe supplying said wine product to one of said first end opening and said second end opening and coupling said pipe receiving said wine product to said branch tube fitting.